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ALABAMA'S ALLEN WINS 2016 BRONKO NAGURSKI TROPHY

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (FWAA) – Finally, the Alabama Crimson Tide landed a winner in the **Bronko Nagurski Trophy** balloting: defensive end **Jonathan Allen**.

The nation's top-ranked team, attempting to win a second straight national title and fifth in eight years, saw Allen claim the trophy as the best defensive player in college football, as chosen by the **Football Writers Association of America**.

Alabama has had a Nagurski finalist seven times in the last eight years; in fact, the Crimson Tide had two of the five 2016 Nagurski finalists. The previous six times, a Crimson Tide player didn't get the nod in Charlotte. But Allen, a 6-3, 291-pound senior from Leesburg, Va., broke that streak after returning for his senior season to improve his draft status.

"I'm honestly speechless right now. I never in a million years thought I would even be up for this award, yet win it," Allen said. "I've got to thank all the guys back at Alabama, God, my parents, my girlfriend, everyone who's had a part in shaping me and making me who I am. This is just a tremendous award."

"Few would debate that Alabama has the nation's best defensive line, and Jonathan Allen is a major reason why Crimson Tide opponents have such a difficult time moving the ball," said FWAA President Mark Anderson of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. "He is the winner of the 2016 Bronko Nagurski Trophy, and had to beat out one of his teammates, Reuben Foster, for it."

The finalists on hand for the banquet hosted by the Charlotte Touchdown Club were: Allen, Alabama linebacker Reuben Foster, Florida State cornerback Tarvarus McFadden, Michigan linebacker Jabrill Peppers and Clemson end Christian Wilkins.

Projected as a high first-round pick in next spring's NFL Draft, Allen has been nicknamed "Superman" for some of his plays. Allen is a standout on the nation's best defense, which, until the SEC Championship Game, hadn't given up a touchdown since Oct. 22 against Texas A&M.

"Jonathan Allen is a fantastic player for us, even a better person and leader," said Alabama head coach Nick Saban. "He's had an outstanding year. I think he's sort of someone that a lot of players should look at who came here weighing probably 250 pounds. We kind of recruited him as an outside linebacker. The guy has developed each and every year into being a better and better and better player. I think sometimes a lot of players lose sight of how football is a developmental game, how they improve, how they can improve their value by continuing to grow and develop as players in college. Jonathan Allen is a great example of that."

Allen is second on the Crimson Tide's career sack list with 26.5 and has nine sacks for 72 yards in losses this season. He has 15 quarterback hurries, has broken up two passes, and blocked a kick. He has scored touchdowns on two fumble recoveries – a 75-yard return against Ole Miss and a 30-yard return against Texas A&M.

The **Bronko Nagurski Trophy** winner was chosen from the five finalists who are part of the 2016 FWAA All-America Team. The FWAA All-America Committee, after voting input from the association's entire membership, selected the Nagurski Trophy finalists and winner.



In addition to the 2016 Bronko Nagurski Trophy winner's announcement at the Charlotte Convention Center, the banquet celebrated the recipient of the **Bronko Nagurski Legends Award**, sponsored by the CTC and Florida East Coast Railway. Navy's **Chet Moeller**, a member of the FWAA's 1975 All-America Team and a College Football Hall of Famer, was honored. Duke head coach David Cutcliffe was the keynote speaker at the banquet.

The FWAA has chosen a National Defensive Player of the Year since 1993. In 1995, the FWAA named the award in honor of the legendary two-way player from the University of Minnesota. Nagurski dominated college football, then became a star for professional football's Chicago Bears in the 1930s. Bronislaw "Bronko" Nagurski is a charter member of both the College Football and Pro Football Halls of Fame.

The **Football Writers Association of America**, founded in 1941, consists of 1,400 men and women who cover college football. The membership includes journalists, broadcasters and publicists, as well as key executives in all the areas that involve the game. The FWAA works to govern areas that include game-day operations, major awards and its annual All-America team. For more information about the FWAA and its award programs, contact Steve Richardson at tiger@fwa.com.

The Bronko Nagurski Trophy is a member of the **National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA)** which encompasses the most prestigious awards in college football. The 22 awards boast more than 700 years of tradition-selection excellence. Visit ncfaa.org to learn more about our story.

ABOUT THE CHARLOTTE TOUCHDOWN CLUB AND ITS SPONSORS

The **Charlotte Touchdown Club** is a non-profit organization founded in 1990 for the purpose of promoting high school, collegiate, and professional football in the Charlotte, N.C., region. The club's activities and services focus community attention on the outstanding citizenship, scholarship, sportsmanship, and leadership of area athletes and coaches. For more information, contact John Rocco (704-347-2918 or jrocco@touchdownclub.com). The official website of the Charlotte Touchdown Club is touchdownclub.com.

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